SPACE AS U.S. GETS SET TO LAUNCH MAN

ATLAS. IT WAS DESTROYED ON SIGNAL FROM GROUND

Last week Project Mercury, the U.S. effort to get a man into space, took one step backward and two steps forward. The backward step was a sizable one. It came as an Atlas ICBM was launched in an attempt to place a Mercury capsule into orbit around the earth. The capsule was crammed with instruments to pave the way for an orbital flight with an Astronaut aboard. But the steering mechanism failed and the missile had to be destroyed (*left*) only 40 seconds after it rose from Cape Canaveral.

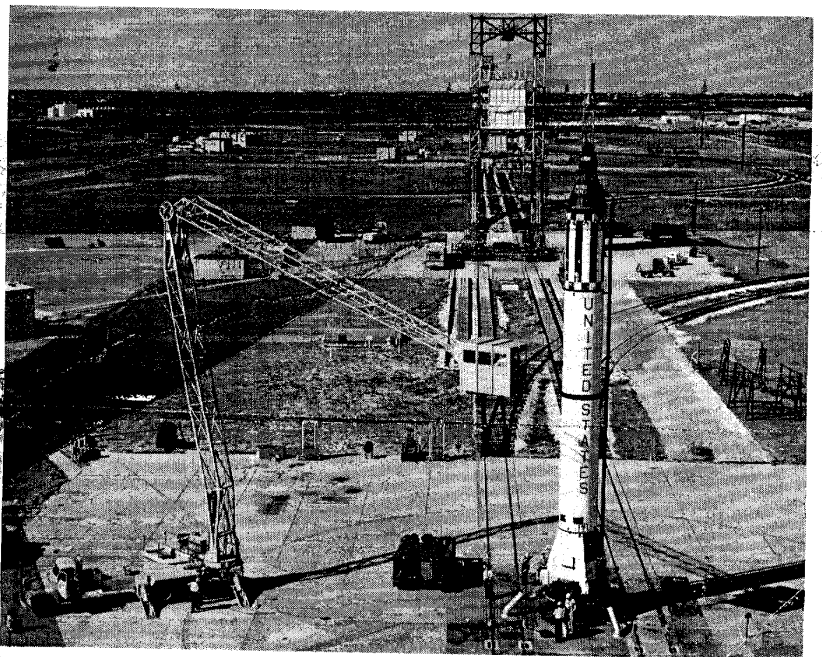
Despite the failure, which could delay plans to put an Astronaut into orbit, the test did have its good side. The escape system, which was designed to pull the capsule free of the missile in case of emergency, worked perfectly and shot the capsule high into the air on its own before the Atlas exploded. Then a parachute dropped the capsule gently into the ocean where it was picked up. NASA engineers were satisfied that an Astronaut would have survived the ride if he had been aboard.

Three days later, at Wallops Island, Va., a Mercury capsule proved itself again. This time it was launched by a cluster of rockets called "Little Joe" which was supposed to toss it 40,000 feet up to test the safety mechanism. One rocket failed, and the capsule went to only 14,000 feet. But once more the escape device worked, and 15 minutes after the capsule was launched it was headed back (*right*).

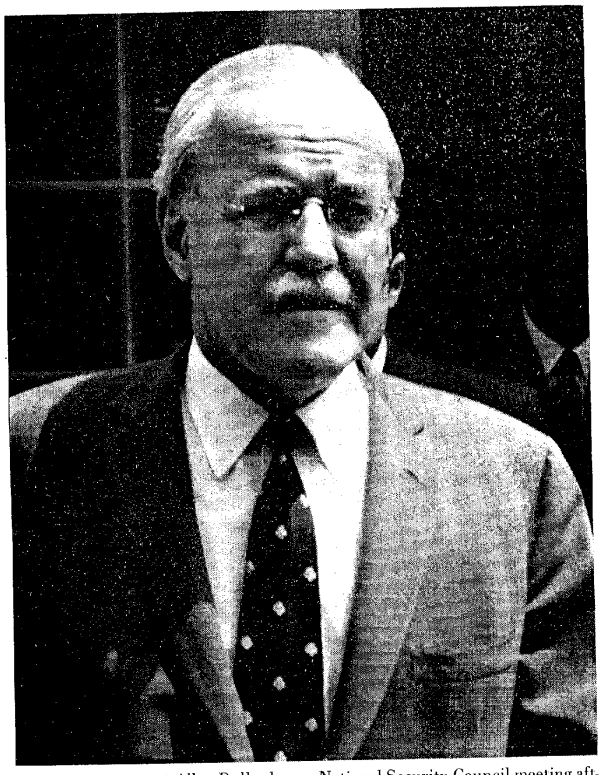
Even as these tests were made, preparations went on at Cape Canaveral to send the first Astronaut into space. It would be a short but crucial ride over the Atlantic on top of a Redstone missile. Redstone had sometimes misbehaved, but a chimp named "Ham" made the trip (LIFE, Feb. 10) and the Astronauts were confident they had a capsule which would work.

WALLOPS ISLAND CAPSULE, carried aloft by "Little Joe" rocket, is returned after safe landing.

LOOKED OVER AND FOUND TO BE IN GOOD SHAPE



READYING REDSTONE which will take first Astronaut into space in Mercury capsule mounted on top—crew at Canaveral tries out cherry-picker crane used to remove Astronaut from capsule in a pinch.



SOMBER CIA BOSS Allen Dulles leaves National Security Council meeting after giving his intelligence report on Laos. Questionable intelligence on Cuba has spurred both President Kennedy and Congress to re-evaluate CIA operations.

THE GRIM NEW LOOK OF KENNEDY'S TEAM

Every responsible face in Washington last week wore a tense and somber look. The impact of the bitter Cuban disaster was still heavily felt. The news of impending catastrophe in Laos, where Communist troops were sweeping pro-Western forces before them, deepened the anxiety. The shock of events called for difficult decisions and implied a shake-out of the half-hearted, the routine and the incompetent in Washington.

The first thing the President did was to reappraise some of the men around him. It was clear that he felt the professional intelligence men, the professional soldiers and the professional diplomats had been found wanting. He retained a high regard for Allen Dulles, who had manfully borne his share of the blame—but Dulles' days in CIA seemed numbered. Secretary of State Dean Rusk came off well; he too had acted with dignity. As for the career diplomats as a whole, the President was coming to conclude that they were nonfighters by temperament and training and of limited usefulness in the fighting situations facing the U.S.

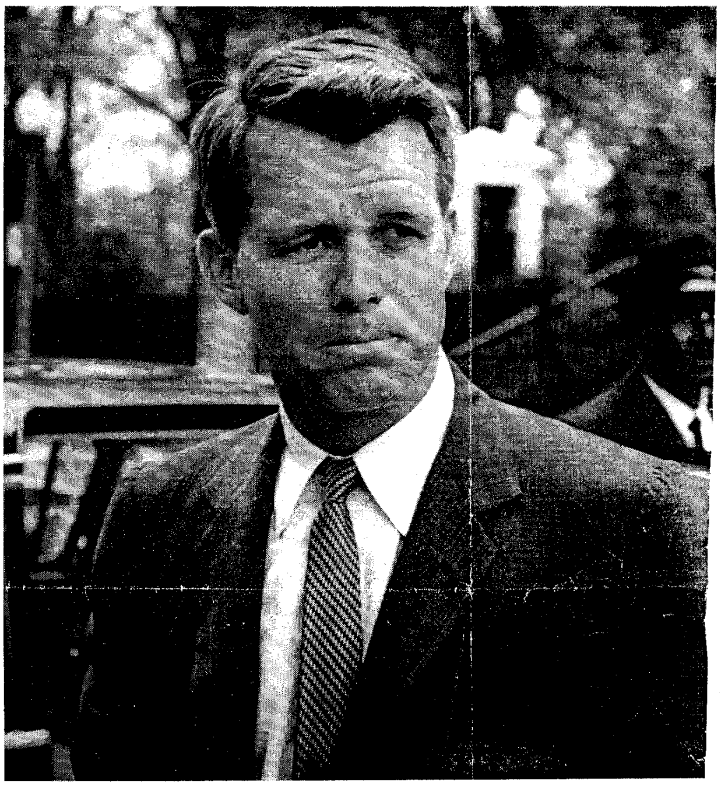
As a result the President in foreign matters decided to fall back on a system that had served him well in his election campaign. He decided to question the professionals, to take nothing they told him for granted, and to subject them to the closest scrutiny by the "amateurs" whom he trusted. Robert Kennedy, whom the President always calls in when the going gets rough, rose to new prominence as trouble-shooter in the Administration. Assistant Secretary of Defense Paul Nitze was put in charge of finding a new solution to the Cuban problem. Deputy Defense Secretary Roswell Gilpatric took the Laos crisis in hand.

None of this meant that miracles were around the corner. The White House was deeply pessimistic about Southeast Asia. It did mean that Kennedy's dreams of "quiet diplomacy" were giving way to a rock-bottom recognition of the job that faced him and of the shortage of tough men around with whom to fight as implacable an enemy as Communism.

CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS make no attempt to conceal their gloom after talking over Cuban, French and Laotian developments with President Kennedy at weekly breakfast meeting. "It was very distressing, very distressing," said

one. Standing (from left) are: House Majority Leader John McCormack; House Whip Carl Albert; Senate Whip Hubert Humphrey and Vice President Johnson. Seated are Speaker Rayburn (*left*) and Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield.

UNSMILING SECRETARY, State's Dean Rusk, was called back by Kennedy from Central Treaty Organization meeting in Ankara to attend emergency National Security Council session on the rapidly deteriorating situation in Laos.



GLUM BROTHER, Robert Kennedy, emerges from the National Security Council session. In order to be free to assist the President across-the-board, he has to turn over most of his Attorney General's duties to Byron ("Whizzer") White.

APATHY AND LEADERSHIP

The Cuba fiasco taught the Kennedy administration at least one lesson: that the Cold War is more total than they had thought. Last week the President spoke to the owners of the U.S. press of the "gravity and totality" of our national danger. The press, he told them, owes the nation at the same time more information, more self-censorship on security matters, and a willingness to "arouse . . . and sometimes even anger public opinion."

Responsible editors and publishers have long been concerned with the problem of press freedom in this unprecedented no-war no-peace situation. The President was mistaken to tell them that the answer is "for you alone"; if security standards are too lax, it is primarily the government's job to define new ones. Still more mistaken, however, was the President's evident worry over the state of "public opinion." To berate public opinion is the oldest dodge of unsure political leadership.

Not since the isolationist battles of the late '30s has any U.S. President been denied public support for a major proposal for the national safety. It is idle for a President to wonder whether the country is behind, ahead of or alongside him in awareness of its danger. The job of leadership is to test and prove this question with action. For all its hard work to date, the Kennedy administration has not made this test. Its call for "sacrifices" from all (in the inaugural) remains unspecified. If public opinion really needs to be "aroused," there is no surer way to arouse it than by some presidential act that will illustrate and combat our danger.

What might such an act be?

In the Cuban aftermath, our diplomats are busily renewing their pressure on Latin governments to take joint action against Castro, as permitted by the Caracas declaration of '54. But assuming (as one must) a continued failure of nerve on our neighbors' part, Kennedy might personally warn Brazil's Quadros, Mexico's Lopez Mateos and a few others that the U.S. is prepared to take unilateral action against armed Communism in this hemisphere, as permitted by the Monroe Doctrine.

In Laos, Kennedy confronts the last phases of a long deteriorating situation which the West may be unable to save. But the least action he can take is to beef up the defenses of embattled South Vietnam and threatened Thailand and give them a firmer commitment of U.S. military support.

In view of the "totality" of our danger, here is another area for immediate action: stronger White House backing for Frank Ellis, the new chief of civilian defense. He believes in fallout shelters, has made a good start in explaining the need for them and is determined to get them built.

Here is still another area. Arthur Dean, our chief negotiator at Geneva for an inspected nuclear test ban, is returning to Washington to report. Thanks to Soviet stalling, he can report no substantive progress whatever. It is high time, then, for Kennedy to call an end to the voluntary moratorium on tests which the U.S. has now been observing for nearly three years.

That is a long time to suspend all technological progress in an art as new and fertile as nuclear weaponry. The AEC has a variety of new weapons and improvements on old which are stalled for lack of testing, including the small all-fusion or "neutron bomb" which could radically change the whole nature of tactical warfare (LIFE, April 4, 1960). Only on the assumption that the Soviets have also suspended testing can this political sabotage of U.S. technical progress be remotely justified. But as Arthur Dean's colleague, Edmund Gullion, understated the case last month, "given the closed nature of their society, we can be less sure of them than they can be of us." The result of these protracted negotiations is that the Soviets have secured an uninspected test ban by keeping alive our noble but unrealistic hope for an inspected test ban. Why should the Soviets give us the second so long as we give them the first?

Kennedy should announce the resumption of underground nuclear testing at once. The political uproar will be painful but ill-informed. Fear of fallout, which led to our first test moratorium back in '58, is irrelevant now, since underground shots create no fallout. Nor is there any necessary connection between the moratorium and continued negotiations on disarmament.

Kennedy's well-considered new defense program fills some gaps in our general preparedness, especially for guerrilla and conventional war. But as Secretary McNamara made clear last week, our strategy still depends on nuclear deterrence, and the readiness to use nuclear weapons of all sizes and kinds. Since that is our strategy, we should remove the growing doubt (caused by the moratorium) that our power to deter is thoroughly up to date.

Such are a few of the actions the President could take at once "to match the urgency and magnitude of [our] dangers," as he put it last week. Some Americans would oppose him, most [we believe] would support him. Few would be apathetic.

HOW TO RAISE EVERYBODY'S PAY

For six months now the level of consumer prices has held stable, and since February's end the foreign drain on our gold reserves has ceased. Welcome as the news is, it's still too early to celebrate, for the growing business recovery (plus prospective federal deficits) could swiftly bring back inflation. The immediate danger is that the auto wage negotiations now underway could result in new wage-price boosts. Economists of varying political shades are therefore forehandedly urging both industry and labor to make some radical changes in their old thinking.

In the past, both have assumed inflation to be inevitable. Business, assuming a continuing rise in wages, refused to recognize the fact of increased productivity as a reason to cut prices; labor, assuming a continuing rise in prices, repeatedly sought wages higher than productivity justified. If both could shake off these attitudes, rising productivity could be translated into lower prices, thus increasing everybody's real wages. The economists:

▶ An Eisenhower Republican, Professor Henry Wallich of Yale University, former economic adviser to Ike, urges labor in *every* industry to hold its wage increases to the level (about 2%) of *national* yearly productivity gains; "In industries where productivity grows faster . . . prices can and should come down."

▶ A conservative Democrat, Federal Reserve's Chairman William McChesney Martin, says: "This wage-price process . . . has got to be faced squarely by both labor and management. And they have got to pass on some of their productivity gains to the consumer in lower prices."

▶ A top liberal braintruster for President Kennedy, M.I.T. Economist Walt Rostow is on record for favoring a "wage-price" treaty in autos and other key industries whereby labor "would accept the continuation of existing money-wage contracts [and] the industries concerned would undertake to pass along in lower prices the productivity increases achieved within the time period of the contract." Industry, however, would keep enough for reasonable profits and plowbacks for expansion and new technology.

Walter Reuther so far has been framing his demands in general terms of an annual wage and cutting the work week without cutting pay. But will their actual cents-per-hour cost be greater than is justified by our *national* productivity increase, whatever the increase in the auto industry? If so, the better part of labor statesmanship this year would be for him to seek a joint program with management to raise *everybody's* real wages through *steady* wage rates and *lower* prices.